

**USDA Service Center
Richland County FSA
2745 West Holly
Sidney, MT 59270**

Telephone 406-433-2103
FSA Fax 406-433-4673
NRCS Fax 406-433-7351
MT FSA Web site:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>

Office Hours:
M-F, 8 AM to 5 PM

County Committee Members

Larry Vaira—Chairman
Orion Sundheim – Vice Chair
Robert Albin – Member
Connie Iversen – Advisor

FSA Office Personnel

Nancy Heins, CED-Programs
Patti Boyer, PT
Tammy Lake, PT
Kathy Obergfell, PT
Marilyn Pust, PT
Jamie Zumbuhl, PT
Charlene Kaercher, TO
Pat Turner, FLO
Patti McGinnis, FLPT
Bruce Johnson, FLOT

NRCS Office Personnel

Jamie Selting, District Con.
Dave Haverkamp, Soil Con.
Channon Bighorn, Soil Con.
Joe Lyseng, Soil Con.

Conservation District

Julie Goss, Administrator

THINK
Moisture
And
Warmth!!



Richland County

May 2008

Responsibilities for CRP Contract Holders

CRP contract holders have certain responsibilities for carrying out the terms and conditions of the CRP contract. Those include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Control all weeds, insects, pests and other undesirable species to the extent necessary to ensure that the establishment and maintenance of the approved cover is adequately protected and there is no adverse impact on surrounding land.
- ✓ Establish and maintain the required vegetative practices.
- ✓ No activity may be conducted on CRP acres without authorization.
- ✓ Prior approval must be received from FSA before any harvesting, grazing or other commercial use of the forage may begin.
- ✓ If land with a CRP contract is sold, the new owners have 60 days to succeed to the contract.

If CRP land is sold and the new owner does not wish to continue the CRP contract, the previous CRP participant will be required to repay all payments received on the contract plus interest and liquidated damages. Liquidated damages are equal to 25 percent of the annual rental payment on those acres not contracted by the new owner.

Management Activities

CRP participants who have contracts prior to Signup 26, may voluntarily request to revise their CPO's to include a management activity and receive cost share. If you are interested in this option please stop by the office to complete the forms. The contracts beginning with Signup 26 do include required management activities. Review your CPO to ensure you understand the management requirements for your contract(s).

There are two primary nesting Dates

May 15 – July 15 *FSA State Committee established Primary Nesting Season for CRP*

May 15 – August 1 *Primary Nesting Season for CRP contracts affected by the National Wildlife Federations settlement agreement with FSA*

Check your Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO) for the primary nesting dates that apply to your CRP contract(s).

LOAN and LDP Violations

Incorrect Certification is either of the following:

- ❖ Certifying a quantity in excess of the quantity eligible for loan or LDP
- ❖ Making any fraudulent representation with respect to obtaining loans or LDPs.

Unauthorized Removal is the movement of any farm-stored loan quantity from the storage structure where the commodity was stored or structures that were designated when the loan was approved to any other storage structure whether or not the structure is located on the producer's farm without prior written authorization from the COC. Unauthorized removal is considered a violation if the producer does not maintain control of the commodity or CCC loses first lien on the collateral.

Unauthorized Disposition is the conversion of any loan quantity pledged as collateral for a farm-stored loan without prior written authorization from the COC.

Consequences of Loan and LDP Violations may be:

- ❖ Assessment of liquidated damages and other administrative actions, and shall be liable for monetary amounts as specified in the applicable regulations and terms and conditions of the applicable forms.
- ❖ Criminal prosecution under Federal Law.

Loan & LDP Final Availability Dates

Loans and LDP's are available to eligible producers who have:

- ❖ Reported acreage of the crop for which a loan or LDP is requested.
- ❖ Complied with all other program provisions

Request for loans and LDP's shall be made on or before the final availability date.

Following are the final availability dates for crops harvested in 2007 for eligible grains, oilseeds, pulse crops, wool & mohair and honey:

Commodity	Availability Date
Corn, Grain sorghum, Mustard seed, Safflower seed, Soybeans, Sunflower seed, Dry peas, Lentils and Small chickpeas	May 31, 2008
Wool/mohair for wool/mohair clipped in calendar year 2008	January 31, 2009

DCP Fruit and Vegetable Plantings

The 2008 Farm Bill has currently not been passed. FSA cannot predict the final terms of what Congress will adapt, however, to ensure compliance with pending farm bill proposals, producers with plans of planting fruit and vegetables (FAV's) in 2008 need to be aware of planting restrictions. These restrictions were applied to base acreage during the 2002 Farm Bill. Please contact the county office for a list of FAV restricted crops. When planting FAV's, producers had the following options:

1. Plant FAV's on a participating farm's "free acres".
2. Plant FAV's on base acreage of a participating farm that has a farm FAV history and takes an acre-for-acre reduction in the DCP payment. NOTE: Farm FAV history is based on the FAV planting history for 1991-1995 or 1998-2001.
3. Plant FAV's on base acreage of a participating farm without farm FAV history, using the producer's FAV history and takes an acre-for-acre reduction in DCP payment. NOTE: Producer FAV history is based on the planting history the producer has of each specific FAV crop.
4. Plant FAV's on a nonparticipating farm.

CRP Maintenance Incentives

Rate Change

When the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was originally announced a \$5/year maintenance rate was added to the contract to maintain the cover. In 2006, that rate was lowered to \$4/year. As of April 11, 2008 that rate has been lowered to \$2/year. The new rate does not affect any contracts previously approved and only applies to new contracts approved after April 11, 2008.

Producers are required to perform management activities included in all contracts approved after May, 2003. These activities are eligible for cost-share assistance.

Please contact the office if you have questions regarding your CRP contract.

COC Election Approaching

Beginning **June 15, 2008**, nominations are being accepted for candidates for County Committee (COC) position.

A county or area served by the COC is divided into local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA is represented by one member on the county committee. Only one LAA holds an election each year.

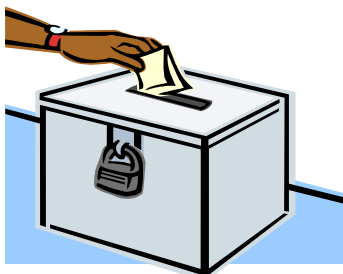
This year the LAA open in Richland County is LAA 1, which is the west side of the county. This LAA has been successfully served by Larry Vaira for 3 full terms. Therefore, he cannot serve another 3 year term without a one term break in service.

The nominee must sign the nomination form in order to be nominated as a COC member. Nomination forms are available at the county office or by logging on to the Montana FSA website at:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

Please remember that as a county committee member you are the local voice of how FSA programs are administered to meet your local community and resource needs.

Nomination forms must be submitted to the FSA county office by **August 1, 2008**. Ballots will be sent to eligible voters beginning November 3, 2008. The final day for voters to submit their voted ballots is December 1, 2008.

VOTE



Measurement Service Charges

On farm measurement is charged at:

- Basic farm fee of \$30.00;
- Plus an hourly rate of \$16.00 for the first hour and \$8.00 for each additional ½ hour after the first hour. The minimum is 1 hour.

The hourly rate includes the time to travel from the FSA county office to the farm, complete the measurement service and return to the county office.

An "Initial Fee" is required at the time the measurement service is requested and the fee must be collected before the measurement service is performed. The initial fee will be the basic rate (\$30) plus the hourly minimum (\$16). Once the service has been completed the actual fee will be calculated. The initial fee will then be subtracted from the calculated fee; a letter will be sent informing you of the additional amount owed. If amount is \$9.99 or less, the additional fee is not charged.

Bin site measurements will be calculated according to the farm number and the physical location of the bins:

- for one farm with multiple bin sites, only one FSA-409 (a written request to have acreage measured by FSA) is required;
- for multiple farms and all the grain is stored in bins at one site, only one FSA-409 is required where the bin site is physically located;
- for multiple farms with a different bin site for each farm, a separate FSA-409 is required for each farm and bin site.

In-office measurements are charged at:

- a basic farm rate of \$15.00 plus a 30-minute minimum rate of \$8.00.

CROP CERTIFICATION

Expect to receive your appointment card in the mail very soon. Call if you need to change the date and time.

Map packets were available April 1. If you have not stopped by the office for yours, please do so at your earliest convenience.

USDA SERVICE CENTER
Farm Service Agency
RICHLAND COUNTY OFFICE
2745 West Holly Street
SIDNEY, MT 59270

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

May 26 – Office Closed, Memorial Day
May 31 – Final loan availability date for various crops
June 1 – Final Planting Date for NAP crop coverage
June 5 – Regular County Committee Meeting
June 15 – COC nominations open
July 4-- Office Closed, Independence Day
July 15 – Crop Certification Deadline
July 16 & 17- Minimal Office Service, Annual District 4 Meeting for Staff
August 1 – Reconstitution Deadline
Notice of Loss – 15 calendar days of the natural disaster occurrence or the date the damage to the crop or loss of production was apparent.

Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

Mark your calendars for the annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium to be held September 30 & October 1 at the Clock Tower Inn in Billings, Montana.

A great slate of topics will be discussed such as Dispelling Agriculture Myths from the American Farm Bureau, a panel discussion from the congressional staffers, source water protection and farm-to-table. Ed Usset from the Minnesota Center for Farm Financial Management will be presenting "Grain Marketing is Simple." These are just a few of the topics, presentations, and activities that will occur during the two day event. Cost of registration is \$60 which includes meals and presentations.

The symposium will begin at 8:00 a.m. on September 30 with registration and end on October 1 at 2:00 p.m.

Continue to watch the newsletter for further details.

